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O F T H E

H O N O U R A B L E S O C I E T Y

O F T H E

I N N E R - T E M P L E.

By WILLIAM SHERRLOCK, D. D. Dean of
St. Paul's, Master of the Temple, and Chaplain in
Ordinary to Their MAJESTIES.

L O N D O N:

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To the W O R S H I P F U L
The M A S T E R S of the B e n c h
O F T H E
H O N O U R A B L E S O C I E T Y
O F T H E
I N N E R - T E M P L E.

My Honoured Friends,

TO justify my Publication of this Sermon, which the Reader will easily perceive was not intended by me for the Press, I must acquaint the World, that it is done in perfect Obedience to your Commands. Your great Loyalty and Zeal for Their Majesties Government, gave you too good an Opinion of it when you heard it from the Pulpit; and if it should

The Epistle Dedicatory.

not answer your Expectations from the Press, yet I hope you will own it as a Testimony of my due Submission to your Judgments, and of those just Respects, which your many and repeated Favours daily challenge from,

Gentlemen,

Your much obliged

and humble Servant,

WILL. SHERLOCK.

I TIM. II. 1, 2.

I exhort therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men : For Kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.



ST. Paul wrote this Epistle to Timothy, to instruct him in the discharge of his Episcopal Office and Power, to which he had ordained him : And the first thing he gives him in charge (whereby we may guess what weight he laid on it) is this in my Text, *I exhort therefore, That first of all, or I first of all exhort, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men.* To affix a proper and distinct signification on these words, *Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions, and giving of thanks*, which are recommended as the distinct parts of Prayer, Learned men tell us, that

that *dehoretis*, which we render Supplications, signifies Prayer to avert evils, *προσδουχαις*, Prayers for the obtaining some good; and that *εν τωιδουχαις*, are properly Intercessions or Prayers for other men; but this is too general a notion of it, since in this place the Apostle applies Supplications and Prayers, as well as Intercessions, to praying for other men, even for all men: And therefore the proper notion of *εν τωιδουχαις*, is to intercede for a sinner, for the pardon of his sin, and to reconcile him again to God, whom he hath offended, as the word is most commonly used. Giving of Thanks is blessing God for good things already received; which the same Apostle makes essential to an acceptable and effectual Prayer.

4. Phil. 6. *Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.* Thus we pray for our selves, That God would deliver us from evil, that he would do us good, that he would forgive our sins; and we thank him for the Blessings, and all the good things we already enjoy; and thus we must do for others, even for all men; tho the Apostle has not so much regard here to our private Prayers, as to the Publick Offices of Religion, those Publick Prayers which are made in the Publick Assemblies by the Bishop and Ministers

nisters, and the whole Congregation of Christians: For this advice which St. Paul gives *Timothy* in these Epistles, concerns the Publick Worship, and Government and Discipline of the Church; we must in our private Devotions pray not only for our selves, but for all mankind; but Publick Prayers, the united Desires and Petitions of the Church, offered up by the Ministers of Christ, whose office it is to Bless and to Pray for the people, are most effectual and prevailing. Before I proceed to what I principally intend, viz. *Our Prayers for Kings, and all that are in Authority*, it will be useful to shew you, on what great Reasons this Duty is founded, of *praying for all men*, as well as for our selves; and that both with respect to *our selves, to other men, and to God.*

First, With respect to our selves. Now 1. This is the noblest exercise of the most Divine Charity; this is truly to love all men as our selves; when we are touched with a sense of their wants, as well as of our own, and do heartily beg all those Blessings for them of God, which we do for our selves; when we are so far from envying their happiness, that we rejoice in it, and bless God for it, as we do for our own: Our

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Charity cannot be perfect without this ; for our power of doing good extends but to a few instances, and can reach but a very few persons ; and if our Charity be no larger than our power, it is a very worthless thing : But a Divine Charity wishes well to the whole Creation, and therefore recommends all mankind to the care and protection of that Almighty Goodness which governs the world. This is the highest Perfection both of the Man and the Christian ; this is the true Spirit of Prayer, to offer up our Prayers to the God of Love, in the Spirit of Love and Charity.

2dly. This obliges us to the exercise of many Christian Graces and Vertues ; if we pray God to forgive our enemies, to be sure we must forgive them our selves ; we must exercise great Patience, and Meekness, and Forbearance towards them ; if we pray God to relieve the poor, to restore the sick, to reform the vicious, to enlighten those who are in error and darkness, and to reduce wandering sheep into his fold, to deliver the oppressed, to support and comfort those who suffer for Righteousness sake, each of these Petitions involve a Duty in them ; for what we pray God to do, we must do our selves, as
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far as it is in our power; and therefore our Prayers for other men oblige us to do good to them, both to their souls and bodies; and he who does heartily pray for other men, will do them all the good he can: The same Charity which inspires his Prayers, will govern his actions; for it is a prophane Contempt and Mockery of God to ask him to do that which we will not do our selves.

3dly. Our Prayers for our selves are most acceptable to God; when we pray for other men also; as they must needs be, because they are offered up in the Spirit of universal Charity, which alone, through the Merits of our Saviour Christ, makes our Prayers, our Alms, and all the good we do, acceptable to God: No Prayer can be lost, which is put up in Faith and Charity: If our Prayers do no good to those particular men for whom we pray, if they be not fit or worthy to receive the Mercies we pray for, yet our prayers, our peace, our blessing, shall return into our own bosoms, 10. Matt. 13.

Secondly, It is very apparent of what use these Prayers are to the world. For many times the Prayers of good men avert those Judgments

which hang over a wicked Nation, and procure publick Blessings for them: Those who never pray for themselves, may reap the benefit of other mens Prayers; and the Prayers of those, who do pray for themselves, will be more effectual, when they are backed and reinforced by the united Prayers of the whole Church for them. It is a mighty comfort to every good Christian to think, that he shares in the Prayers of the whole Christian Church; especially when he is under a cloud himself, and either cannot pray himself, or prays with great disturbance of thoughts, with great diffidence and distrust, and despondency of spirit; at such times especially all men are very desirous, that other good Christians would pray with them, and for them; and such men may comfort themselves, that how unfit soever they are to pray themselves, they have the Prayers, not only of their Friends and immediate Pastors, who personally know them, but of all good Christians all the World over, who offer up their Prayers for themselves, and for all Mankind, especially for all the Members of Christ's *Mystical Body*; which is a priviledge to be valued next to the Intercession of Christ for us all, and should mightily reconcile us to a duty, which is so universally beneficial: for praying
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ing for other men intitles us to their Prayers for us; and though we are not particularly named in their Prayers, God knows to whom they belong, and will apply them himself.

Thirdly, And there is great reason, why God should command, and encourage, and reward our Prayers for each other: Not only 1. Because it is the exercise of the most Divine Charity, and the Instrument of many Christian Virtues, as you have already heard, which you will grant a sufficient reason why God should encourage it. But 2^{dly}, Because it is the most becoming Address we can make to God, and that which also makes the most glorious and lovely representation of him; that he is the Prince and the Father of all Mankind; who made, and who governs, and who preserves, and provides for all his Creatures; which is as great and honourable a thought as we can have of God; and indeed this teaches us how to pray to God, and what to expect from him. That we must not flatter our selves that he will be fond and partial to us; for all men are his Creatures, *the Soul of the Father, and the Soul of the Son*, are both his; and therefore as we may expect from God the kindness of a Gracious

cious and Merciful Creator, and through our Lord Jesus Christ, the kindness of a Father; so we must expect, that he will deal equally by all: That he will make no other difference, but what our personal Qualities and Virtues make: And therefore we must not presume to ask any thing of God, which is to the injury, or prejudice, or lessening of our Brother, to gratify our Pride, or Revenge, or some other evil Passions; for we pray to a common Father, who will adjust the Interests of Mankind, and have a due regard to the happiness of all. And 3^{dly}, This gives credit and reputation to Religion in the World; that true Piety and Virtue makes the Prayers of good men effectual, not only for themselves, but for others; that the better men are, the more power they have with God, which makes them a kind of *Patron Saints*, and *tutelary Angels* to the places where they live; this is a mighty honour to be the Friends and Favourites of God, to be able to fetch down Blessings from Heaven by our Prayers: This makes Religion and Virtue truly venerable in the sight of all men; and it becomes the Wisdom of God to dispence his Blessings in such a manner, as may conciliate Esteem and Reverence to true Religion in the World.

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It is time now to pass from this general Command of *praying for all men*, to that particular direction to pray for *Kings, and for all that are in Authority*. But before I shew you, what great reason there is to pray for Kings, it will be necessary to inquire, what Kings we must pray for. For though St. Paul makes no difference, there are some who do: Some there are among our selves, who withdraw from our Communion, because we pray in our publick Offices for Their present Majesties King WILLIAM, and Queen MARY, whom God long preserve.

There is not a more expresse Command for any thing in Scripture, than there is for praying for *Kings, and for all that are in Authority*, *ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ*, in a state of Eminence and Superiority above others. And if Their present Majesties be so, as it is visible to all the World that they are, then they are included in this Apostolical Precept, to pray for Kings, and all in Authority.

Upon what Pretences some among us reject so plain a Duty, is sufficiently known: They say, by *Kings*, the Apostle means only *Lawful and Rightful Kings*; that is, such Kings as are advanced to the Throne by an antecedent Legal Right,
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according to the Laws and Constitutions of the Countries and Kingdoms which they govern. And therefore in an *Hereditary Kingdom* no man is, or can be King, and no man must be *prayed for* as King, but He who has the *Hereditary Right*, as being the *next lineal Heir*. This Right, they say, is in the late King *James*, not in Their *present Majesties*; and therefore notwithstanding Their being in possession of the Throne, we must not own Them, nor pray for Them as King and Queen.

I do not intend, nor is it fitting, to dispute Their Majesties *Right*, which is no matter of Scruple to me: Nor would it become me, before *Two such learned Societies of Law*, to say what the Laws of the Land require in such Cases. And therefore to keep to my own Profession, I shall only desire these Persons to tell me, where there is any such distinction as this in Scripture? *viz.* That we must not pray for *all Kings*, but only for *legal Kings*, who had an *antecedent legal Right*; for in any other sense, those are *legal Kings*, who are invested with the Regal Authority, with all the Legal Rites of investiture. The Command is in general, to *pray for Kings*, and for *all that are in Authority*; and if we may excuse ourselves from so plain a Duty by distinctions of our own

own inventing, there are few Duties in Religion, but what we may deliver ourselves from by such arbitrary Distinctions. As for instance,

There is an express Command in Scripture, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* Which one would think were a very express Prohibition of the Worship of Saints or Angels, or any other Being besides God. But the Papists easily avoid this by the help of a Distinction, which the Scripture is unacquainted with: They say, we must worship God only with the Worship of *Latria*, but we may worship Saints and Angels with the Worship of *Dulia*, tho' the Scripture appropriates all Religious Worship to God. Thus as our Saviour tells the *Pharisees*, *God commanded saying, Honour thy Father and thy Mother, and he that curseth Father or Mother, let him die the death: But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his Father or Mother, it is a gift by whatsoever thou maist be profited by me, and honour not his Father nor his Mother, he shall be free; thus have you made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition, 15 Matth. 4, 5.* Thus it is in our present Case; the Apostle commands us to pray for Kings, and for all that are in authority: No,

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say these Men, not unless they be *Legal Kings*, tho' they have all the Ensigns of Majesty, and are invested with the Regal Authority and Power, with all the Legal and Customary Rites and Solemnities of Investiture, and are acknowledged and recognized for King and Queen by the Estates of the Realm. And thus this Command is of no effect neither; for it seems it is a matter of Wit, or Law, or Philosophy, to know who is King; whereas St. *Paul* supposed that it was a plain matter of sense; that he who administered the Government with a Regal Authority, and was owned and submitted to by the Nation, was the King for whom we must pray.

There is reason to conclude, that St. *Paul* speaks of *such Kings*, if we will allow, that he spoke the Language of the Age wherein he lived; for in that Age, and in all the Ages of the World ever since, those were called Kings, and had the Preheminency of Power and Authority, who by the Consent and Submission of the People administered the Government with a Regal and Sovereign Authority, whether they had any *Antecedent Right or Title* to the Government or not.

I will not now dispute this matter, but would only desire these Persons to consider, whether they are as certain that by *All Powers*, 13 *Rom.* 1. the Apostle onely means all such Powers as had an antecedent legal Right and Title to Power, as they are, that he expressly teaches, That *all power is of GOD*? Whether they are as certain, that it is unlawful to pray for Kings, who are *legally* invested with the Royal Power, though as they imagine, without any antecedent legal Right to the Crown, as they are, that the Apostle commands us to *pray for Kings, and for all that are in authority*? Whether they are as certain, that it is their Duty to adhere to a *supposed Right* against the publick Judgment of the Nation, in opposition to their Present Majesties, (who fill the Throne by the Consent and Authority of *the Estates of the Realm*) though to the great Disturbance of Government, and to the most apparent Ruine (could they prevail) of the true Religion, the Lives and Fortunes of their Fellow-subjects, and the Liberties of their Native Country, as they are, that it is our Duty to pray for Kings? In a word, whether they are as certain, that *the Roman*

Powers at that time were *Legal and Rightful Powers*, by such an *Antecedent Legal Right* as they now insist on, as they are, that *St. Paul* commanded the *Christians* to be subject to those *Powers*, and to pray for them ?

These are very proper Questions about the degrees of Evidence and Certainty: For if the Rule be plain and certain, and the Exceptions from this Rule uncertain; if the Rule have a Divine Authority, and the Exceptions have nothing to support them but some uncertain Reasonings, such Reasonings as contradict the general Sense and Practice of Mankind in all Revolutions; I think wise and good Men ought to chuse the safer side, and to suspect their own Reasonings, since the Scripture has made no such Exceptions (not in a time of the most violent Usurpations, when if ever there was the greatest reason to have made them,) and the generality of Mankind, and even the most sober and considering Men reject them, as having no solid foundation in Reason and Nature.

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Having premis'd this, I proceed now to consider the Manifold Obligations, which lie upon us to pray for Kings.

First, Because Kings are the great Instruments of the Divine Providence in the World, they are those great Wheels which move and alter the whole Scene of humane Affairs; every Irregularity in their Motions is soon felt, and causes very fatal Convulsions in the State; their Mistakes are like the Eclipses of the Sun, but more portentous and ominous than they, their Smiles or Frowns are like the kind or malignant Influences of the Heavens, which revive drooping Nature, or threaten an universal Ruine; *Quicquid delirant Reges*, the People suffer by the Indiscretions and ill Government of a Prince, but a wise, and just, and religious King is the greatest Blessing in the World, and therefore we have as much Reason to Pray for the Kings, as we have to pray that God would make his Sun to shine, or the Rain to descend on the Earth.

Secondly,

Secondly, Though Kings act with a Sovereign Power, yet they are intirely under God's Government, *The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water, he turneth it whither soever he will,* 21 Prov. 1. makes his Will and Affections run in this or that Channel, as will best serve the ends of his Providence and Government. The most absolute Prince is under secret and invisible Restraints; God can a thousand ways change his Purposes and divert him from what he intended to something else, which he little thought of; and indeed it is very fitting that those who are so much above humane Restraints, should be managed by an unseen Hand: For if God does not govern those who govern the World, there is in a great measure an end of his Providence, for then the Fate of Kingdoms would be at the Will of Princes, and that has the greatest Influence of any thing else upon the Happiness or Misery of private and particular Men. Now if God can, if God does govern Princes; this makes it necessary to pray heartily to God for them, for there is the first Spring of Motion; if we make God our Friend, he will
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bleſs, and direct, and counsel our Prince who acts under him, and in Subordination to his Counsels and Decrees.

Thirdly, I need add no more to convince you how necessary it is to pray for Kings, but to shew you how much they need our Prayers, how much they need the Assistance and Direction of God to prevent those Inconveniences and Miscarriages, which all humane Governments are subject to.

For 1. The Government of Kingdoms and Nations is a Work of great Difficulty, and that which requires somewhat more than humane Art and Skill ; it is no easie matter to deal with the various Lusts, and Interests, and Passions of Men, to maintain Peace at home and abroad, to adjust the Interests of Subjects and Neighbour-Princes, to make War and Peace, to advance the Trade of the Nation and to govern it when it is rich ; to be loved by Subjects without being thought easie and remiss which exposes to Contempt, and to be feared without being hated ; to know whom to trust, and whom to be aware of, to discern
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Mens Integrity and Abilities for Counsel, or for the Administration of Justice, for Civil or Military Employs, to know how to choose Favourites, and which is as hard a thing how to govern them; when to resist the Fury and Torrent of the People, and when to comply without seeming to yield, and a thousand other emergent Difficulties there are, which require very prudent and yet *extempore* Remedies, where every false step proves very injurious either to Prince or People. These are the true *Atlas*es, who bear the Weight of the World upon their Shoulders, and if we find it so difficult to govern a Family, a Parish, a little Corporation, to attend to one or to very few things, of any moment and consequence, shall we not assist those by our Prayers who have so much a heavier Burden to bear, and which unless they carry it steady, we our selves shall be crush'd with the Fall of it.

2. We must consider also, that without the Divine Assistance and Counsel, Princes are but like other Men, and liable to the same Mistakes, nay indeed they are more expos'd to Misinformations,

mations and Misrepresentations, and such like Abuses, which have a very ill Influence upon Government, then other Men are : No Prince can so particularly inspect all the Affairs of his Kingdom, as a Man can his own Family and particular Estate, but they are forced to see and hear with other Mens Eyes and Ears, which too often prove very corrupt Mediums, and tincture the Object with their own private Passions: Court-Factions, and the cross Interests of aspiring Favourites, who carry on their private Intrigues without any regard to the Publick Good, or the Service of their Prince, but will Sacrifice all to undermine a Rival, and to gratifie their Ambition and Revenge, may suggest very ruinous Counsels to the dividing both the Hearts and the Interests of Prince and People, and Court Parasites, who are only Ecchoes to the Prince's Inclinations, and always advise what they think he would have advised; betray him to those Mischiefs which might be prevented by faithful Counsellors: This is the Unhappy State of Kings, which nothing but the Divine Counsel and Providence can prevent:

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And is not this a very forcible Reason to pray for them ?

Especially, 3^{dly}, when we consider, that Kings are exposed to more and greater Temptations than other Men ; they have the same Passions that other Men have, but not the same Restraints to curb them, they have nothing but the Fear of G O D , and the Considerations of Religion and another World, which we find too weak to govern the generality of Mankind, without some more sensible Motives : What a Temptation is Sovereign Power, when we see very few Men, who can use any degree of Power without abusing it ; a Power which will justify what it does, and make it right, which will not be opposed nor contradicted, which governs the Opinions or the Tongues of Men ; which never wants Flatterers to admire whatever it does, which can stamp new Titles and Characters of Honour when it pleases, and at least change the Names and the external Value of Things, though the Nature of Things is somewhat stubborn : a Power which is apt to have
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very tender *Resentments*, and to be very severe in its *Revenge*, which gives free scope to all the irregular *Appetites* and *Passions* of *Humane Nature*. Such a Power, I say, as this, which is so easily abused, and which is almost an invincible *Temptation* to abuse it self; and which can do so much *Mischief* when it is abused, is a sufficient reason to make us very earnest and importunate in our *Prayers* to *GOD* for *Kings*.

But if ever there were reason to pray for *Kings*, certainly we have great reason to pray for the long *Life* and prosperous *Reign* of their present *Majesties*, whom *GOD* hath set over us.

The *Apostle* directs us to pray for *Kings*, that *under them we may live quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty*. As for *Godliness*, this we must take care of, whatever our *Prince* be. No *Prince* can take our *Religion* from us, if we resolve to keep it; but they may disturb our *Quiet* and *Peaceable Enjoyment* of it: which was the

State of the Christian Church under Heathen and Persecuting Emperours, and the reason of this Command to Pray for the Peaceable Enjoyment and Profession of their Religion.

This we enjoy with great Advantages under their Majesties Government, and therefore have great reason to pray for them, under whom we may if we please, *live quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty.* Thanks be to GOD, we are so far from any danger of being persecuted for our Religion, that nothing can more effectually recommend us to the Favour of our Princes, than the sincere Practise of Religion and Vertue. They set us an Example of it themselves, they like, commend, reward it, where they see it: Nay, we have a King who exposes his own Sacred Person to all the Fatigues and Hazards of War to secure to us our Peace at Home, and the quiet possession of our Religion; to break the power of that great Oppressor, who Invades the Liberties of Europe, and Persecutes the Professours
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of the true Religion, wherever he has Interest or Power, to do it. We have a King who has already rescued this Church and Kingdom, when their Condition appeared hopeless and desperate; and certainly had been so, long before this, had not God made Him the glorious Instrument of our Deliverance. And shall we not pray for such a King, who is the very *light of our eyes, and the breath of our nostrils*? To whom we owe our Laws and Liberties, and Religion, and on whose Preservation, and long and prosperous Reign, depends our greatest visible Hope and Prospect of a quiet and secure Enjoyment of them for the time to come.

And as we must pray, so we must give God Thanks for King's too, and for all the Blessings we enjoy under their Government: This is one part of the Solemnity of this Day; to bless God for the Restauration of the King and Royal Family, and our Ancient Government and Constitution both in Church and State, after the Miseries and Calamities
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of a Civil War, and the Oppression of our Fellow-Subjects ; and those who can remember those Days, must confess, that this was a very great Mercy. And though the Glory of this Day seem'd to be Eclips'd and overcast in the Reign of the late unfortunate Prince, yet it breaks forth again with a new Lustre and Brightness in the Advancement of their present Majesties, from whose Government we may reasonably expect as great Blessings to this Church and Kingdom, as ever they yet enjoyed.

Kings are God's Ministers, and advanced to the Throne by him, and a good King, is as great a Temporal Blessing, as God can bestow upon any Nation, and the *very Advancement* of their Majesties to the Throne, was it self a *great and immediate Deliverance*, as great as our *Redemption* from *Popery* and *Arbitrary Power*. And yet this is not *all* we are to bless God for ; but we are bound also to bless him for the almost miraculous Preservation of the King's Person, as well from Treachery and
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Violence, as from the Chances of War, and for the no less miraculous Successes of his Arms, especially the late wonderful Success at Sea, of which I hope future Ages will feel the blessed Effects : A Success in all the Circumstances of it so wonderful, that I know no Story that equals it, except we may compare it to the miraculous Overthrow of *Pharaoh* and all his Host in the Red Sea.

And yet it is no less wonderful, that any *English* Protestants should invite the *French* to conquer them, to place a zealous Papist and an Arbitrary Prince upon the Throne again ; and that after all the Miracles of Providence whereby these Designs have been defeated, and as we have Reason to hope, for ever disappointed, there should be any Protestants, who think it their Interest, as long as ever they can forbear, not to believe it, and when they can disbelieve it no longer, think it a great Judgment and Calamity upon them to be delivered.

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But let *Us* bless God, that he hath answered our Prayers, and saved us out of the Hands of our Enemies ; let us humbly beseech him to continue these Mercies to us; and *the glorious Instruments* of them ; to bless their Majesties Persons, Counsels and Arms, and to perfect this Deliverance at Sea by as surprizing Successes, which after such auspicious and promising Beginnings, we hope in God, may attend his Majesty's Person and Arms in *Flanders* : Which we beg Almighty God to grant through our Lord Jesus Christ ; To whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour, Glory and Power, now and for ever. *Amen.*



F I N I S.

